



U.S. Immigration  
and Customs  
Enforcement

# News Release

September 11, 2006

## **ICE agents seize more than 2 tons of cocaine in Puerto Rico**

*Greek-flagged vessel arrives at port of San Juan with more than 4,900 pounds of cocaine*

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico—U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) announced today the seizure of more than 4,900 pounds of cocaine on board the Greek-flagged vessel M/V Sierra Express at the port of San Juan. The seizure was part of Operation Caribbean Corridor, an investigative/law enforcement initiative by ICE, Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI), and United States Coast Guard (USCG) in the Caribbean Basin.

The M/V Sierra Express docked at the port of San Juan at approximately 1:00 p.m. on Sep. 10, 2006. The vessel's last port of call prior to arriving to San Juan was Puerto Cabello, Venezuela.

During a required inspection of the vessel, a K-9 unit of U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) alerted on several boxes of printing paper inside one of the containers of the Sierra Express. The container was subsequently transported to the examination facilities of CBP where a thorough search revealed the presence of numerous kilo-size packages of a white powdery substance that when tested reacted positive for cocaine.

“Through the Caribbean Corridor Initiative, ICE, along with the FBI, DEA, and the USCG, have been able to intercept tons of narcotics and illegal merchandise destined to United States,” said Lydia St. John-Mellado, special agent in charge of ICE investigations in San Juan. “Our CBP partners have the technology, resources and intelligence to detect any type of contraband coming to the United States from abroad and will continue working with ICE and other Caribbean Corridor Initiative agencies to prevent these massive quantities of drugs from reaching the streets of Puerto Rico.”

No arrests were made during this seizure; however, ICE as well as other Operation Caribbean Corridor participating agencies continue with the investigation.

Puerto Rico Police Department and San Juan Municipal Police officer participated in this seizure.

# ICE #

*U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of four integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.*